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TREATMENT FOR A SPRAINED ANKLE

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A simple treatment for sprained ankle, involving no loss of time and not attendant with any ultimate impairment of function may help others as it has me.

Four or five times within a year or two I have chanced to be in a home where some one would appear with a sprained ankle and I have been asked what to do. While I know it is not within a nurse's sphere to treat cases, or to place herself in the position of assuming responsibility, we do very often meet people who will hobble around for weeks because of a simple sprained ankle, treating it themselves with fomentations or awkward bandaging, frequently having trouble with the foot for a long time afterward. Furthermore, I believe that a nurse who takes a position as a school or college nurse should know how to strap the foot for a simple sprain, of course using her judgment as to whether the injury is sufficient to necessitate calling a doctor.

The method I am giving here, I learned from a prominent orthopedic surgeon and I believe it is considered a most successful and approved method.

Take a strip of adhesive plaster about 2 inches wide and 12 inches long; starting about the lower third of the leg, bring it down under the arch of the foot and up the opposite side of the ankle, taking care to draw it tightly under the arch, then over-lap this about one-half inch with another piece the same width and length. Then, using one inch wide adhesive, start from the heel and apply short strips, each one over-lapping the other by about one-half inch, to meet and overlap the broad strip on both sides, running these strips up as far as the lower third of the leg. Over these narrow strips apply two inch strips of the same length, starting from the same point and running up the same distance, each one over-lapping the other just as with the narrow ones. It would then be well to apply a couple of short wide strips drawn tightly under the arch, and a narrow strip under the sole of the foot and up the course of the tendo Achilles to prevent slipping.

Be sure to leave a space free over the top of the foot, not less than one half inch. If this space is left, the strapping will not interfere with the circulation no matter how tightly applied.

After the strapping has been applied in the manner outlined above, apply an ordinary gauze bandage and allow it to remain on a few

hours, the object of which is to make the adhesive adhere to the foot and to prevent the edges from rolling up.

It would then be well for the patient to begin walking around, as the adhesive straps will not only act as a support to the ligaments, but will at the same time have the effect of gentle massage while using the foot.

This adhesive strapping should be worn without change until it becomes loose, then if necessary re-apply it, but this is rarely found necessary.

The mistake made by many nurses and some doctors in strapping for a sprain, is to put the strapping on figure of eight fashion, which does not give the required support, and at the same time interferes with the circulation to the extent of causing the toes to swell, necessitating its removal.

See figures 1 and 2 for the proper way to strap the foot for a sprain.

See figure 3 for the wrong way to strap the foot for a sprain.

The New York State Health Department, under the leadership of Commissioner Hermann M. Biggs, is the latest to enlist its forces in the war against cancer. The entire March number of *Health News*, the department's monthly bulletin, is devoted to consideration of the nature, prevalence and treatment of malignant disease with the object of creating among the people "a healthy vigilance which leads to the taking of expert advice on the first appearance of danger signals."

"There is nothing that any one of us can do to prevent the occurrence of cancer except in avoiding certain specified causes of local irritation" says this issue, in an editorial. "On the other hand, there is incontrovertible testimony as to the probability of its cure in a large percentage of cases if taken in time. That cure consists in the complete surgical removal of the growth at the earliest possible moment. Early diagnosis, early removal; there is not now nor has there ever been any other successful method of curing the disease."

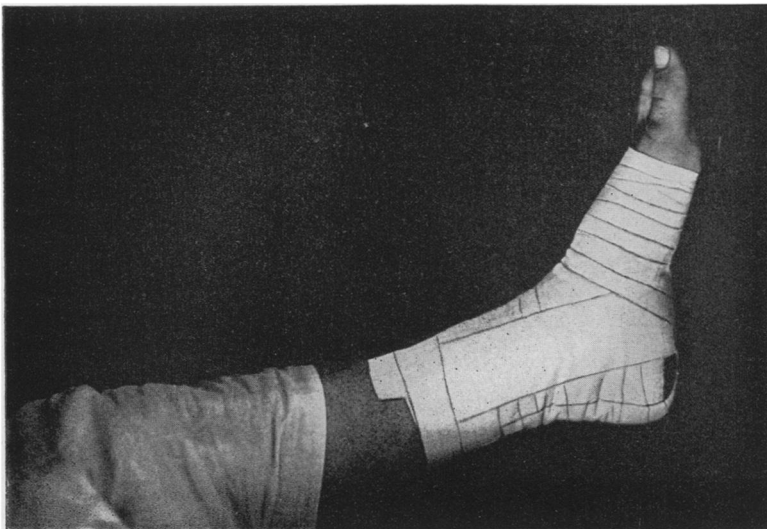


FIG. 1. SIDE VIEW

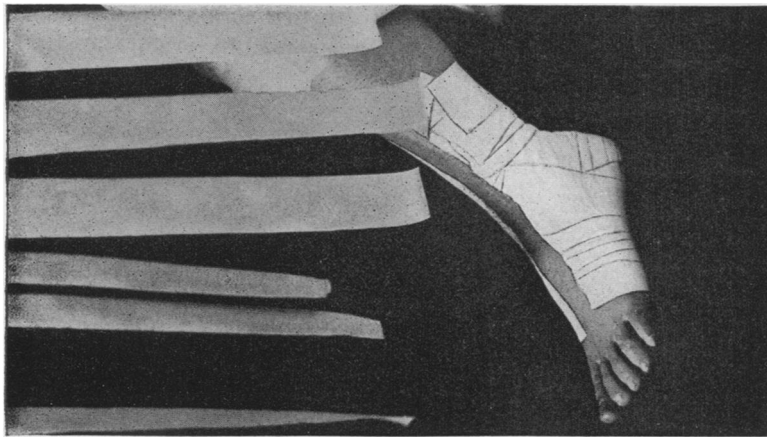


FIG. 2 FRONT VIEW
STRAPPING FOR A SPRAINED ANKLE

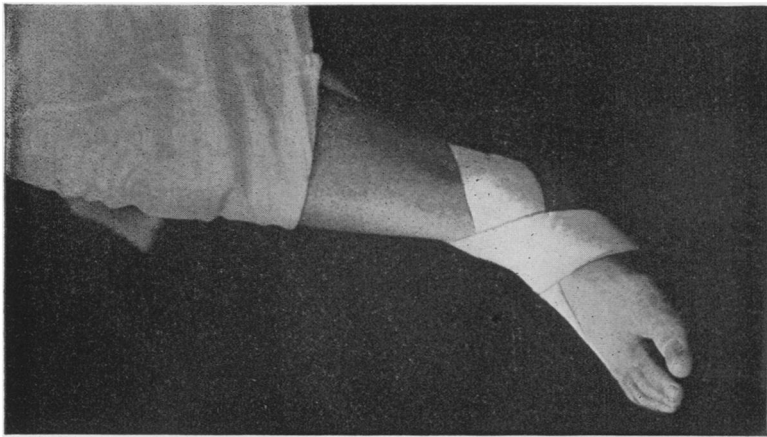


FIG. 3 THE WRONG WAY